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Dear parents and carers

We are now at the end of 2020 and it has been a very hectic year for everyone. We wanted to thank you all for working with the schools to ensure that your children can safely attend. It has been wonderful to see so many of our children and young people attending school and managing with the new 'norm'. Can we also take this opportunity to thank the staff and pupils in all our schools who have been resilient, determined and constantly positive in the face of significant change and challenge.

We know that this will continue next year when we return in January and ask that you continue to send your children to school when they are fit and well. Our schools are very conscious of the guidance on covid and the risk assessments that they have in place ensure that all our children, young people and staff remain safe at all times. If you do have any concerns, then please do speak to the headteacher.

If your child has symptoms of Covid over the Christmas break, they must self-isolate in line with Government guidance. You should arrange for them to have a test and you must let the schools know the result if they developed symptoms within the first forty eight hours of the end of term e.g. if they finish school on the 18th December at 2pm and develop symptoms before 2pm on the 20th, then even if they have the result on Tuesday 22nd December then the school must be notified. This is because the school may need to undertake Track and Trace and contact other pupils or staff if their symptomatic period has covered any of their time in school.

'Where a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms more than 48 hours since being in school, the school should not be contacted. Parents and carers should follow contact tracing instructions provided by NHS Test and Trace.

- For the first 6 days after teaching ends, if a pupil or staff member tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19), having developed symptoms within 48 hours of being in school, the school can be contacted to assist in identifying close contacts and advising self-isolation, as the individual may have been infectious whilst in school.*



- *School staff will not remain on-call or conduct any contact tracing more than 6 days after the final day of teaching. Where schools last teaching day is on Friday 18th December, no coronavirus contact tracing will be expected of school staff beyond Thursday 24 December.*
- *Where pupils are required to self-isolate due to contact with a positive case after the first 6 days following the end of term, schools do not need to be informed about their absence until the first day of the new term.'*

Further guidance can be found at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/what-parents-and-carers-need-to-know-about-early-years-providers-schools-and-colleges-during-the-coronavirus-covid-19-outbreak>

- A reminder that the symptoms of Covid are:
- A high temperature – this means you feel hot to touch on your chest or back;
- A new, continuous cough – this means coughing a lot for more than an hour or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours, (if you usually have a cough it may be worse than usual);
- A loss or change to your sense of smell or taste – this means you've noticed you cannot smell or taste anything, or things smell or taste different to normal.

Targeted, SMART COVID-19 testing for residents who DON'T have COVID-19 symptoms is now taking place at:

- Splash World in Southport
- Bootle Leisure Centre
- Aintree Racecourse

All three centres are open from 9am to 6pm, seven days a week – no appointments necessary so you can just turn up.

SMART testing will identify if you have COVID-19 but don't know it because you don't have symptoms. You will get your result in 30 minutes.

(People who have had a positive coronavirus in the past 90 days should not attend.)

Getting a test will help stop you accidentally passing it on to your friends, family, colleagues, clients or customers, who might be vulnerable.

<https://mysefton.co.uk/2020/12/14/details-of-targeted-covid-smart-testing-for-sefton-residents-emerge/>

We were very pleased that vouchers to cover the Christmas period for all children and young people eligible for Free School Meals will be provided. Schools will contact parents and carers on the process they are using to ensure all those eligible receive them. If you are unsure, then please do contact the school.

It just remains for us to say we hope you have a wonderful Christmas and that you all remain safe and covid free.

Regards

TRICIA DAVIES - Interim Head of Education